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Inouye says Turner denies he'll take over as Joint Chiefs' head



CIA Director Stansfield Turner has pooh-poohed reports that he will be named to replace Gen. George Brown as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Sen. Daniel Inouye told The Advertiser yesterday.

Inouye, who is chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, said rumors have been circulating for some time in Washington that Adm. Turner's appointment to head the CIA "was a stepping-stone to (the chairmanship of) the Joint Chiefs of Staff."

Inouye met yesterday with both Turner and President Carter. After the meeting, Inouye told The Advertiser:

"I spoke to Adm. Turner about it (the rumor) and he pooh-poohed it. He intends to stay at his present position for a few years. Gen. Brown's term expires next year.

"All I can say is you have a rumor. There's no foundation to it."

Inouye said he did not raise the matter with Carter because "it was enough to ask the admiral."

The possibility of Turner's elevation was raised publicly this week by syndicated editorial cartoonist Ranan Lurie.

Accompanying a cartoon (shown at right) depicting Turner stepping up to the position of chairman of the Joint Chiefs Staff was a note from Lurie.

"This caricature is based on reliable information received directly from White House sources, concerning moves to replace Gen. George Brown

with Adm. Stansfield Turner as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the near future," Lurie wrote.

Reached at his home in Connecticut, Lurie told The Advertiser that high-level White House sources had indicated that within a few weeks Carter will announce the changes.

Lurie said he thinks Turner has been approached by Carter to assume the chairmanship and "I think that he has agreed, according to my sources."

Lurie said he knows Turner is recommending to Carter his own replacement as director of the CIA. But Lurie said he is less positive that Turner's nominee is a "professional insider of the CIA."

Meanwhile, Patricia Barrio, associate press secretary at the White House, said, "We do not normally comment on speculative stories. I have no comment on any replacements of Gen. Brown."

"The candidate you have (Turner) is the man President Carter handpicked for the CIA," Barrio told The Advertiser. "There doesn't seem to be too much substance to your story."

Brown has come under criticism for his outspokenness. In the three years he has been chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Brown has publicly offended such diverse groups as the U.S. Jewish community, the Shah of Iran, American civil libertarians and the British military. Cartoonist Lurie recently made public comments made by

meddlesome and irresponsible in its dealings with defense and foreign aid.

Brown was also quoted as saying, "If any citizen in this country is so concerned about his mail being read or is concerned about his presence in a meeting being noted, I'd say we ought to read his mail and we ought to know what the hell he has done."